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### For holidays, Madison Red Cross offers gifts that can save lives

#### *Gift certificates for health, safety classes good year-round*

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MADISON - With the holidays arriving, the Colonial Crossroads Chapter of the American Red Cross has gift items that can be appreciated by anyone.

Gift certificates for American Red Cross Health and Safety Classes, ranging from "Child and Infant First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)," "Adult CPR with Automated External Defibrillator (AED)," "Water Safety," "Basic First Aid" and even "Pet First Aid" are thoughtful, and could help save a life in the New Year, the Red Cross noted.

Classes are held at chapter's Madison and Summit offices, and with community partners. Private classes can be arranged for school groups, community organizations or even for a group of friends who would like to hold a class in a private home.

In addition to classes, the chapter has various first aid kits, ranging in price from the deluxe "Family First Aid Kit" for \$24.95 to an "Individualized First Aid Kit" which measures four inches by four inches and costs just \$7 – a gift for a teacher, or a stocking stuffer.

#### **'Essential Gifts'**

"I think many people will be more cost-conscious this holiday season and there will be fewer but more essential gifts," said Christy Hodde, executive director of the Colonial Crossroads Chapter. "In addition to our classes and health and safety gifts, we also have an 'adoption' program that allows you to adopt a health and safety training mannequin, or an individual touched by disaster. These gifts may be made in the name of a loved one, and represent a truly meaningful way to give during the holidays."

For information or to order gift items, visit [www.ccnjredcross.org](http://www.ccnjredcross.org).

Chatham High School students Abbey Earle and Gioia Kennedy volunteer for the chapter and are hoping to establish a Red Cross club at Chatham High School. They stopped by the chapter's Madison office on Madison Avenue in November to look over the gift items for friends and family.



Chatham teens Abbey Earle, left, 15, and Gioia Kennedy, 16, stopped by the American Red Cross offices in Madison in November to preview holiday gift items, including first aid kits and gift certificates for health and safety classes. The students said they hope to establish a Red Cross club at Chatham High School.

"I think giving a friend or relative a gift certificate for a life-saving class is a wonderful present that anyone would appreciate," said Kennedy. "The certificates can be used at any time during the year, so the recipient can just check the chapter's Web site to find a class that fits their schedule. I think it's a unique gift."

### **Gifts For Soldiers**

The national American Red Cross also has an online holiday catalogue that offers unique ways to help soldiers and families during the season of giving: a \$20 phone card for active duty service members to connect with loved ones when overseas, or a "Patriot Comfort Kit" containing a phone card, robe, shower shoes, toiletry items and iTunes card to provide a warm welcome to veterans arriving home. The gifts are available at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).

During the winter, the Colonial Crossroads Chapter's Disaster Action Team responds to increasing house fires, and needs more community support. The chapter assisted 27 families and sheltered 36 individuals last year, with most of the incidents during the cold winter months. The chapter welcomes donations to support its services. Checks made payable to the Colonial Crossroads Chapter may be mailed to 695 Springfield Ave., Summit, N.J. 07901.

"In these tough economic times, more than ever, people want their gifts to matter. You can do that with an American Red Cross gift that helps a local family facing a crisis, or helps a service member stationed overseas," Hodde said.

The Madison Chapter House is located at 1 Madison Ave. and may be reached at (973) 377-0455.

The Summit Chapter House is located at 695 Springfield Ave. and may be reached at (908) 273-2076.

The Colonial Crossroads Chapter serves Madison, Summit, Chatham Borough, Chatham Township, Florham Park, East Hanover, Long Hill Township, Berkeley Heights, New Providence and Springfield Township.